

Amendments to the Specification:

Please amend the specification as follows:

Please replace paragraph starting at page 6, line 19, with the following rewritten paragraph:

FIGURE 2 shows a spool 10 according to a particular and second embodiment of the first aspect of the present invention. The spool 10 is provided with two flanges 12' and 12". A steel cord 14, twisted in S-direction, and a steel cord 16 ~~[[20]]~~, twisted in Z-direction, are wound in parallel and adjacent to each other on spool 10. The distance s, as measured along a line parallel to the axis 18 of spool 10, is less than 5 mm. When using spools according to this particular embodiment of the invention on a creel in the field of rubber tires, an S-cord and a Z-cord will lie, one adjacent to the other in a composite ply rubber-steel cord. If all the spools on the creel will be spools according to the invention, there will be an equal number of S-cords and Z-cords on average over the whole composite rubber - steel cord ply. S-cords will alternate on average with Z-cords over the whole composite ply. In such a configuration it is likely that any residual torsions present on S-cords may compensate on average any residual torsions present on Z-cords so that eventually cut composite strips rubber - steel cord do not exhibit curling. Within the context of the present invention, the terms "residual torsions" are defined as follows: if one end of a specified length of cord is allowed to turn freely, the number of residual torsions is equal to the number of revolutions counted. An imbalance of residual torsions over the totality of steel cords within one composite strip rubber – steel cord is known as the main cause of curling. Avoiding this imbalance reduces the risk for curling. And, as explained above, avoidance of curling may facilitate the automated handling of the strips. In such configuration it is sufficient that the steel cords present in the cut strips have on average no residual torsions. As a result it is no longer required to fine-tune the amount of residual torsions present on each single steel cord during its twisting step. This may considerably reduce the auxiliary equipment required, more particularly, the automatic torsion control may be cancelled.